



JOHN ENGLER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



THOMAS D. WATKINS, JR.
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

April 1, 2002

Ms. Magalie Roman Salas, Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, Suite TW-A325
Washington, DC 20554

**RE: Comments Submitted by the Office of the Michigan Information Network
Pertaining to [CC Docket No. 02-6] Schools and Libraries Universal Service Support
Mechanism**

Dear Ms. Salas:

The purpose of this letter is to confirm to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) support by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for the above referenced comments submitted to the FCC by the Office of the Michigan Information Network (MIN) as a collaborative effort with MIN, the Library of Michigan, and other Michigan organizations involved in the E-rate program.

MDE supports the statement expressed by MIN that in order to improve operations, ensure equitable distribution of program funds, prevent fraud, waste, and abuse, and make working with the E-rate program easier and more convenient for all parties, some changes in program rules are definitely necessary. We concur with the MIN recommendations for changes to the administrative processes and rules as proposed in the above referenced comments to the FCC.

Even though schools in Michigan have benefited from the E-rate program over the past four years, many other schools, both public and private, have been hindered from benefiting due to issues such as the lengthy, complicated and confusing application process and the inability to make changes that occur during the funding cycle through no control of the applicant (e.g., changes in service providers). The recommendations provided in the MIN comments document address some of these critical issues.

We hope the FCC will give serious consideration to making the recommended changes so that all schools and libraries will benefit from the E-rate program.

Sincerely,

Thomas D. Watkins, Jr.

KATHLEEN N. STRAUS - PRESIDENT • SHARON L. GIRE - VICE PRESIDENT
MICHAEL DAVID WARREN, JR. - SECRETARY • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER - TREASURER
MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE - NASBE DELEGATE • JOHN C. AUSTIN • HERBERT S. MOYER • SHARON A. WISE

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov • (517) 373-2224